

## ***Instructions for the Tabernacle (Exodus 25:1 – 31:18)***

### ***Call for Free Will Offering: Exodus 25:1-9***

#### ***Exodus 25:1-9***

God instructed Moses to *raise a contribution for Me; from every man whose heart moves him you shall raise My contribution*. The offering was not compulsory but of grace – each person, male and female, was called to give freely, as they desired.

***2 Corinthians 8:12: For if the readiness is present, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have.***

***2 Corinthians 9:7: Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.***

In verses 3 through 7, the specific items needed were identified. Then Moses told the people what was needed. Then Moses told the people the purpose of the offering, and what was going to be done with the funds, in verses 8 and 9.

### ***Instructions for the Tabernacle: Exodus 25:10-34:35***

#### ***Exodus 25:10-30:38: Elements for the Tabernacle***

As God finished instructing Moses on the collection for the work of the Tabernacle, He instructed Moses to construct everything, “*According to all that I am going to show you*”. Beginning with Exodus 25:10 and through 30:38, the Lord gives Moses detailed specifications for the construction and production of the various articles and items for the service of worship in the Tabernacle. As with the Ten Commandments, God proceeds his instructions with the words, “*You shall,*” over 160 times, emphasizing the importance of doing what God had commanded, exactly as God had commanded.

Not only did Moses receive detailed and precise instructions from the Lord, but was also shown a pattern or model of everything to be constructed. Unlike ourselves, Moses was not confronted with the difficulty of interpreting the Lord’s instructions, which can seem confusing. Thus, we can, only at best, attempt to determine what seems the most reasonable the Lord meant.

## Chronological Study: Genesis

Exodus 25:10-22	Ark of the Covenant	God's presence; where God meets with man, now and eternal salvation.
Exodus 25:23-30	Table of Showbread	Spiritual life in Jesus; wood and gold – Jesus the God-man. The bread represents God's presence in our lives.
Exodus 25:31-40	Golden Lampstand	Jesus Christ is the Light of the World.
Exodus 26:1-6	Curtains of Linen	
Exodus 26:7-14	Curtains of Goats Hair	
Exodus 26:15-30	Boards and Sockets	
Exodus 26:31-37	The Veil and Screen	The second veil, the one separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies, represents the flesh of Jesus' body.
Exodus 27:1-8	Brazen Alter	God's judgment against sin.
Exodus 27:9-21	Court of the Tabernacle	
Exodus 28:1-43	Priests Garments	Garments of service before the Lord
Exodus 29:1-46	Consecration of Priests	Sacrifice for sin, dedication, consecration and communion
Exodus 30:1-10	Altar of Incense	Jesus' perpetual intercession
Exodus 30:17-21	Brazen Laver	The forgiveness of sins; your sins are washed away.
Exodus 30:22-33	Anointing Oil	The presence of the Holy Spirit; setting one apart as holy
Exodus 30:34-38	Incense	Prayers rising to God.

The details of the articles and elements of the Tabernacle and worship were far from arbitrary. Each detail, from the Ark of the Covenant to the priestly garments, held significance and conveyed a symbolic and spiritual message.

First, the very Tabernacle signified God's desire to dwell among His people, but the sinfulness of man prevented God. Thus, God had to resolve the issue; man was incapable of perfecting himself.

The three veils of the Tabernacle separated sinful men from a holy God. The first veil, at the eastern entrance, opened into the courtyard. As one moved westward, they would encounter another veil, another separation between sinful man and holy God, which only the priests could pass through to enter the Holy Place. This was actually the first veil into the Tabernacle proper. The final veil separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies and only the High Priest, once a year, was permitted to pass through this veil.

## Chronological Study: Genesis

The bronze altar and laver were designed for animal sacrifices and washing. Both items were in the outer courtyard. The golden lampstand, table of showbread and altar of incense were all located within the Holy Place. The golden altar of incense stood immediately in front of the veil leading into the Holy of Holies, which contained the Ark of the Covenant, with the Mercy Seat.

The lampstand, table of showbread, and altar of incense are all made of gold. While bronze symbolizes sin, gold speaks of the deity of God.

The entire structure and procedure of the Tabernacle is a picture of Jesus and His redemptive work. All the articles of the courtyard were made of bronze, the altar, laver, and the posts, and symbolized sin. While all the articles in the Tabernacle proper were made of gold and represented God. Even the colors of the clothing and curtains speak of the holiness of God and His redemptive work.

*Bronze Altar* Symbolizes God's judgment against sin

*Bronze Laver* A great picture of a person who trusts Jesus for the forgiveness of sins. the base was made from the women's mirrors of highly polished bronze, to remind us to see our true sinfulness.

Water is symbolic of two concepts in scripture:

- the Holy Spirit Who comes into our life, convicts us of sin (John 16:8), and starts living in us to change us (John 7:37-39)
- the Word of God which reveals to us our sin (John 15:3) and is useful for reproof, conviction, and instruction in righteousness (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

***Ephesians 5:26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word***

*Gold Lampstand* Reminds us of Christ, the Light of the World.

***John 1:4: In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.***

***John 1:9: That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.***

***John 8:12: Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."***

***John 12:46: I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness.***

The Holy Place is alive with symbolism about Jesus.

*Table of showbread* Made of acacia wood and overlaid with gold. The wood speaks of Jesus' humanity and the gold of His deity – Jesus the God-man. The bread that was placed on the table represents God's presence in our lives.

***Exodus 25:30: And you shall set the bread of the Presence on the table before Me at all times.***

The actual Hebrew wording is the “bread of the Face.” It symbolizes Jesus' presence. – His life. We live because He lives.

***John 6:51: I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread also which I shall give for the life of the world is My flesh.***

*Altar of Incense* Represents the intercession and the memorial of Jesus. While the golden lampstand was to burn perpetually, the bread of the Presence was to be replaced every Sabbath. The incense was to be burned every morning and evening. Blood was applied to this altar on the Day of Atonement.

***1 Timothy 2:5: For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus***

*Ark and the Mercy Seat* The ark with the mercy seat is where God meets with men. It represents our meeting place in this life and the place of our eternal salvation.

The second veil, the one separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies represents the flesh of Jesus' body. Thus, when the veil tore at the death of Christ, the way to God, and access to God was made open; there was no longer a barrier to God.

***Matthew 27:51: And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split.***

***Hebrews 10:19-22: Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.***

***Exodus 31:1-11: The Skilled Craftsmen***

In Chapter 31, God calls Bezalel, of the tribe of Judah, and Oholiab, of the tribe of Dan, to be the lead craftsmen in the construction of the Tabernacle articles. God always equips those whom He calls for the ministry to which He calls them.

***Exodus 31:12-18: The Sign of the Sabbath***

As work is about to begin on the Tabernacle, the Lord gave Moses that the Sabbath is to be a perpetual sign of the covenant between Him and Israel. God is emphasizing the importance of obeying His commandments; one is not to violate God's commandments under the guise or justification of working for the Lord.

***Exodus 31:13: "But as for you, speak to the sons of Israel, saying, "You shall surely observe My sabbaths; for this is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you.***

***Exodus 31:17: "It is a sign between Me and the sons of Israel forever; for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day He ceased from labor, and was refreshed."***

Chapter 31 closes with Moses receiving from God two tablets of stone with all of His instructions, written by "the finger of God."

***Exodus 32:1-34:35: The Covenant Broken & Restored***

***Exodus 32:1-18 The Golden Calf***

The people, including Aaron, could not walk by faith for 40 days, without the visible presence of their leader, Moses. The faith was centered on following a man; often like children, their faith was faith in what or who they saw; they were following and trusting in a man, not God. They could not continue without the visible presence of Moses. The visible presence of God and the visible display of His power had not moved or changed their sin-corrupted, impatience and unbelieving heart.

***2 Corinthians 5:6-7: Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord -- 7 for we walk by faith, not by sight***

In verse 7, God told Moses, "your people, whom you brought up from the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves." As the mediator of the covenant, the people were the responsibility of Moses. This was a significant test for Moses. Was he going to move to save the people or exalt himself while removing the difficulty of shepherding the people? The humility of Moses was exposed in the preservation of Israel; the nation was more important than his own life.

***Luke 23:34: But Jesus was saying, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." And they cast lots, dividing up His garments among themselves.***

***Exodus 32:19-35 Moses Anger***

As Moses entered the camp, he found them given over to lewd pagan idolatry. When confronted, Aaron blamed everyone and everything rather than take responsibility for himself. God immediately judged the people and commanded Moses to send those who were for the Lord to kill all who were sinning and to show no mercy – regardless of their kinship or friendship.

The following morning Moses told the people of their great sin and he went before the Lord to intercede on their behalf.

***Exodus 33:1-34:35 Moses Intercedes for God's Presence and to Know God***

With the sin of the people, God is ready to send the people forward, under Moses, but without His presence, so that He would not destroy the people. Moses interceded to have God continue to lead them but asked that God might show him His glory, i.e., that he might know God deeper, that he might lead the people for God better. God allowed Moses to see the remnant of his glory after He had passed by Moses. In Chapter 34, Mose returns to the mountain to meet with God again and receive another copy of the tablets with a warning for the people to serve God with obedience.

***Construction of the Tabernacle: Exodus 35:1-40:38***

Chapters 35 through 39 detail the actual construction of the Tabernacle in accordance with the instructions of the Lord. Whereas the operative word in the instructions was “*According to all that I am going to show you,*” the repeated phrase in these chapters is “*just as the LORD had commanded Moses.*”

In chapter 40, the Tabernacle is erected, and “*the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.*” Because the glory of the Lord covered the tent of meeting and filled the Tabernacle, Moses was unable to enter.

***Leviticus 8:1-10:20: Installation of the Priests***

Chapter 8 of Leviticus is the consecration and installation of the Priest, as instructed in Exodus 28 and 29. In Chapter 9, despite the offerings of consecration and the morning and evening sacrifices, Aaron had to make sacrifices for his sins, showing perfection was not obtained.

***Hebrews 10:1-4: For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near. 2 Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins? 3 But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year. 4 For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.***

## Chronological Study: Genesis

In chapter 10, two of Aaron's sons' sinned in their priestly duties (they may have been drunk or handled their responsibilities improperly because they were drunk), for which God immediately killed them. Aaron and his two other sons were told not to demonstrate any grief over their deaths, rather they were to continue to fulfill their responsibilities and demonstrate that God is holy, "*I will be sanctified.*"